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MIAMI HERALD  
10 April 1985

FILE ONLY

# Latin policy foes charge harassment

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WASHINGTON — U.S. activists opposed to the Reagan administration's Central American policies, particularly those who visit Nicaragua, say they are being subjected to increased harassment by federal agencies — including travel delays and the seizure and photocopying of personal papers.

Lawyers representing activists claim the FBI is trying to intimidate them. The situation, they said, is reminiscent of government activities in the 1960s and '70s against Vietnam War opponents.

U.S. officials deny it, insisting that what is being done is a standard part of intelligence-gathering activities.

Over the past two years, scores of Americans belonging to pacifist organizations have been called or visited by FBI agents and, according to a lawyer with the New York-based Center for Constitutional Rights, at least two have

received Internal Revenue Service audit notices.

Several people returning from Managua also have been delayed at airports and their papers temporarily seized, photocopied or reviewed on the spot.

In January at Miami International Airport, U.S. Customs Service officers detained Edward Haase, a leftist free-lance journalist from Kansas City, for about four hours as he returned from a two-month stay in Nicaragua, according to affidavits filed in Washington federal court.

An FBI agent allegedly took his address book and other papers and copied them. Haase is now suing for the copies.

"We believe that what the FBI is doing is just harassment as part of an attempt to intimidate people into stopping their opposition to Reagan's policies in Central America," said David Lerner, an associate with the Center for Constitutional Rights.

"There is obviously a very substantial investigation now going on regarding people who have visited Nicaragua or are otherwise connected with groups dissenting from U.S. foreign policy on Central America," said Michael Ratner, the attorney with the center who is representing Haase.

Without commenting on specific FBI operations, an FBI spokesman denied the bureau's actions are politically motivated.

"We do not investigate groups who have different views or opinions and who under the Constitution are free to do so," said

Manuel Marquez at FBI headquarters in Washington.

"We investigate individuals who violate federal laws in which the FBI has investigative jurisdiction and individuals whose actions are being directed by some foreign power."

When reports of activists being investigated first surfaced last year, officials said the FBI was checking for possible involvement in 16 anti-government bombings since 1983, including one at the U.S. Capitol. A federal grand jury currently is probing the blasts.

Officials said the investigations also sought to establish whether activists were linked to U.S. urban guerrillas or were directed from Cuba and Nicaragua.

The FBI has since broadened its activity to include general intelligence on Nicaragua in view of deteriorating relations with the Sandinistas, U.S. officials say.

Ratner's office says that aside from the Haase case it has recorded at least 20 other cases of alleged harassment since Jan. 1.

Court papers filed on Haase's behalf say that when he arrived in Miami, two Customs officers saw Nicaraguan publications in one of his suitcases. FBI agent Joe Miranda arrived about 25 minutes later.

Miranda examined the contents of Haase's luggage, separating a diary and an address book.

Later, the affidavit said, Miranda and a Customs officer photocopied the material and returned the originals to Haase.

"They wanted to harass me," Haase said. "When they saw I had the names of other [activists] they wanted to copy them to continue their investigation."

Haase retained Ratner, who contacted Paul Phillips, listed in the affidavit as the Miami FBI special agent in charge.

According to Ratner, Phillips said "he was not surprised" Haase's papers were photocopied, since he "had been returning from Nicaragua."

Phillips refused to return all the copies, Ratner said, and added that the material was "disseminable," meaning the FBI could distribute it to other government agencies.

Miami FBI spokesman Joe Del Campo declined comment, saying "the case is under litigation."

Ratner went to court on Haase's behalf, suing the FBI and Customs for the documents. Federal District Judge Thomas P. Jackson issued a temporary restraining order forbidding dissemination of the papers. A hearing is set for April 23.

In a March 28 letter to Rep. Don Edwards, D-Calif., chairman of the House Judiciary Committee's constitutional and civil rights subcommittee, Ratner cited other instances of what he termed harassment of activists.

Ratner said a Missouri man whose name is in Haase's address book received an "anonymous call about ... his political opinions and activities" three days after the Miami incident.

Ratner said another entry in Haase's book, the Rev. Gary Jarvis of the University of Missouri at Kansas City, complained that his mail had been opened.

Jarvis said he went to Nicaragua in January with a religious delegation that toured combat zones to protest U.S. support for Nicaraguan insurgents.

Rep. Edwards wrote to FBI chief William Webster asking for an explanation, but his office has received no response.

In his letter to Edwards, Ratner listed two activists who said they were notified of IRS audits shortly after their return from Nicaragua.

"We don't audit anyone for political reasons," said IRS spokesman Wilson Fadely. "Returns are selected through the normal selection system."